E/1996/76

United Nations

Committee for Development Planning

Report on the thirtieth session
(28 and 29 May 1996)

Economic and Social Council
Official Records, 1996
Supplement No. 18

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United Nations • New York, 1997

NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures.

ISSN 0257-0661

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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

1. The thirtieth session of the Committee for Development Planning was held at United Nations Headquarters in New York, 28-29 May 1996. Nineteen members of the Committee attended: Maria AUGUSZTINOVICS, Dionisio Dias CARNEIRO-NETTO, Makhtar DIOUF, Essam EL-HINNAWI, GAO Shangquan, Patrick GUILLAUMONT, Nurul ISLAM, Louka T. KATSELI, Taher KANAAN, Linda LIM, Nguyuru H. I. LIPUMBA, Solita C. MONSOD, Bishnodat PERSAUD, Akilagpa SAWYERR, Klaus SCHWAB, Arjun SENGUPTA, Frances STEWART, Lance TAYLOR and Miguel URRUTIA. Five members were unable to attend: Just FAALAND, Ryokichi HIRONO, Nora LUSTIG, Alexandre SHOKHIN and Alvaro UMAÑA. A list of members and their affiliations is contained in annex III.

2. The session was opened by the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat, who made a statement outlining the history and mandate of the Committee and its working methods. He noted that the Committee had been requested by the General Assembly to undertake a general review of the list of least developed countries every three years, and that such a review, as well as consideration of possible improvements in the criteria for identifying the least developed countries, should be submitted to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council in 1997. He also noted that the Committee had complete flexibility in its work and could also select other topics to examine and submit a report on its findings to the Council.

3. The officers elected at the thirtieth session for a term ending on 31 December 1997 were:

Chairman: Nurul ISLAM

Vice-Chairman: Klaus SCHWAB

Rapporteur: Louka KATSELI

4. The Committee had before it Economic and Social Council decision 1995/215 on the Committee for Development Planning as contained in E/1995/L.3; the report of the Secretary-General on the methods of work of the Committee (E/1995/82); and other documentation, as listed in annex II.

5. The Committee heard statements by Mr. Richard JOLLY, Special Adviser to the Administrator of UNDP and a former member of the Committee, and by the President of the Economic and Social Council, Mr. Jean-Marie Kacou GERVAIS (Côte d'Ivoire).

6. Substantive services for the session were provided by the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. The Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis was also represented at the session.

II. TERMS OF REFERENCE

7. The Committee took note of Economic and Social Council decision 1995/215 of 10 February 1995, in which the Council reaffirmed and enlarged upon the mandate of the Committee, which had been established in 1965. The consolidated mandates of the Committee were derived from General Assembly resolutions 2084 (XX), 2096 (XX), 2564 (XXIV), 44/212 and 46/206; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1035 (XXXVII), 1079 (XXXIX), 1089 (XXXIX), and 1625 (LI); and from the report of the Committee for Development Planning on its first session (E/4207/Rev.1).

8. In discussing its terms of reference, Committee members attached particular importance to (a) assessing world development trends and prospects; (b) identifying national and international policies that would enhance the ability of developing countries and economies in transition to participate effectively in a globalizing world economy and achieve the goals agreed at United Nations global conferences; and (c) undertaking periodic reviews of the list of least developed countries and the criteria used for identifying them.

9. The Committee agreed that it would willingly consider problems referred to it, within the limits of available time and resources.

III. METHODS OF WORK

10. Pending a fuller review of its methods of work at its thirty-first session, the Committee agreed to continue its practice, as approved in Economic and Social Council resolution 1625 (LI), of holding plenary sessions of up to one week, for which preparations would be made by up to three working groups meeting for 3 to 5 days in New York, Geneva or a suitable United Nations headquarters venue based on programmatic consideration, with each working group comprising up to eight members of the Committee, including experts co-opted, as appropriate, to supplement the expertise of the Committee members themselves.

IV. ARRANGEMENTS FOR FUTURE WORK

A. Work programme for the thirty-first session (1997)

11. The Committee agreed on the indicative two-year work programme outlined below, and decided to prepare for its thirty-first session (New York, May 1997) by convening three working groups, which would be supported by relevant studies to be undertaken by the Secretariat and independent experts on the themes selected.

12. The Committee decided that the working groups would submit their findings to it at its thirty-first session, in early 1997, as inputs to its report on that session.

13. The Committee agreed that, in addition to the members of the working groups indicated below, the members of the bureau might join one of the three working groups, and each working group might also utilize co-opted experts, within existing resources, to assist it in its work.

14. The Committee agreed that in accordance with Council decision 1995/215, the Chairman of the Committee would brief the Council at its substantive session of 1997 on the results of its thirty-first session.

1. Rethinking the impact of globalization on development

15. The Committee agreed to examine the following issues related to the impact of globalization on development: (a) globalization trends in trade, capital flows and technology transfer; (b) factors leading to a homogeneous policy regime and its implications for development; (c) implications of globalization for the international economy and international governance; (d) recommendations for national policies, institutions and governance in developing countries; (e) recommendations for policies in developed countries; and (f) recommendations for policies of international organizations.

16. Working Group I, which would examine those issues, would include Frances STEWART (Chairperson), Lance TAYLOR (Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur), Dionisio CARNEIRO-NETTO, Ryokichi HIRONO, Linda LIM, Akilagpa SAWYERR and Miguel URRUTIA. It would meet in New York from 10 to 12 October 1996.

2. Re-examining stabilization, structural adjustment and economic reform in the context of globalization

17. The Committee agreed to examine the following issues related to stabilization, structural adjustment and economic reform in the context of globalization: (a) objectives of stabilization, adjustment and reform; (b) impact on national development, including on poverty, social cohesion, human development, regional disparities and the environment; (c) the situation of economies in transition; (d) causes of successes and failures; (e) institutional implications of policy reform; (f) recommendations for national policies and institutions of developing countries; (g) recommendations for policies of international organizations and developed countries.

18. Working Group II, which would examine those issues, would include Arjun SENGUPTA (Chairman), Solita MONSOD (Vice-Chairperson/Rapporteur), Makhtar DIOUF, GAO Shangquan, Taher KANAAN, Nora LUSTIG, Bishnodat PERSAUD and Alexandre SHOKHIN. It would meet in New York from 20 to 22 November 1996.

3. General review of the list of the least developed countries

19. The Committee agreed to review the list of the least developed countries (annex IV) and to consider possible improvements in the criteria for identifying them, as provided for in General Assembly resolution 46/206.

20. Working Group III, which would conduct that review, would include Patrick GUILLAUMONT (Chairman), Essam EL-HINNAWI (Vice-Chairman/Rapporteur), Just FAALAND and Nguyuru LIPUMBA. It was agreed that Working Group III would also consider any aspects of the issues examined by the other two working groups that were directly related to the situation of the least developed countries and other small countries with particular problems of vulnerability. It would meet in New York from 13 to 15 January 1997.

4. Other matters

21. The Committee also decided that at its thirty-first session, it would examine its working procedures with a view to improving them, in particular to reflect the ongoing work of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly and their subsidiary bodies, in accordance with Council decision 1995/215.

B. Provisional work programme for the thirty-second session (1998)

22. The Committee decided that it would consider inter-generational issues and social security as part of its 1997-1998 work programme, in the light of the decision of the General Assembly to observe 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons.

Annex I

AGENDA

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of agenda and organization of work.

3. Themes of the work programme for 1996-1997.

4. Methods of work.

5. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its thirtieth session.

Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

1. Provisional agenda.

2. Note on possible elements for a work programme.

3. Brief note on the Committee for Development Planning.

4. Report of the Secretary-General in methods of work of the Committee for Development Planning (E/1995/82).

5. Decision 1995/215 of the Economic and Social Council (as contained in E/1995/L.3, Committee for Development Planning).

6. Note containing brief biographical information on members of the Committee.

7. Note by Mr. Richard Jolly, Special Adviser to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, entitled "Expert advice for the United Nations: a tribute to Mr. John Lewis".

8. Report of the Committee for Development Planning on its twenty-ninth session, Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1994, Supplement No. 2 (E/1994/22).

9. "Views on possible themes and topics for the consideration of the Committee for Development Planning", communication from Ryokichi HIRONO, Committee member.

10. Report of the Secretary-General on coordinated follow-up to major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields (E/1995/86).

11. "Shaping the twenty-first century: the role of development cooperation", document prepared by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (Paris, May 1996).

12. United Nations, An Agenda for Peace (United Nations publication, Sales No. 95.I.15).

13. Draft resolution submitted to the General Assembly by Venezuela, entitled "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields" (A/50/L.73).

14. Note by the Secretariat entitled "Identification of the least developed among the developing countries: criteria for designating countries as least developed" which was before the Committee at its twenty-ninth session (12-14 January 1994).

15. Report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group of the General Assembly on an Agenda for Development (A/AC.250/CRP.1 and Add.1).

16. Note on the identification of the least developed among the developing countries.

17. Proposed medium-term plan for the period 1998-2001 (A/51/6) (perspective).

Annex III

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

AUGUSZTINOVICS, Maria (Hungary)	Professor of Economics University of Budapest
CARNEIRO-NETTO, Dionisio Dias (Brazil)	Professor of Economics University of Rio de Janeiro
DIOUF, Makhtar (Senegal)	Professor of Economics University of Dakar; Chairman Centre for Applied Economics
EL-HINNAWI, E. (Egypt)	Professor National Research Centre, Cairo
FAALAND, Just (Norway)	Member Christian Michelsen Institute
GAO Shangquan (China)	Member Overall Research and Coordinating Panel on National Economic and Social Development of the State Council
GUILLAUMONT, Patrick (France)	Director Centre for Study and Research for International Development; Professor of Economics University of Clermont-Ferrand
HIRONO, Ryokichi (Japan)	Professor of Economics Seikei University, Tokyo
ISLAM, Nurul (Bangladesh)	Emeritus Fellow International Food Policy Research Institute Washington, D.C.
KATSELI, Louka T. (Greece)	Professor of Economics University of Athens
KANAAN, Taher (Jordan)	Consultant in economics and business
LIM, Linda (Singapore)	Research Director South-East Asia Business Program Centre for South and South-East Asia Studies University of Michigan
LIPUMBA, Nguyuru H. I. (United Republic of Tanzania)	Professor of Economics University of Dar-es-Salaam

LUSTIG, Nora (Argentina/Mexico)	Senior Fellow Brookings Institution; Professor of Economics Centre of Economic Studies El Colegio de Mexico
MONSOD, Solita C. (Philippines)	Professor of Economics University of the Philippines
PERSAUD, Bishnodat (Guyana)	Professor of Caribbean Sustainable Development University of the West Indies; Director Centre for Environment and Development
SAWYERR, Akilagpa (Ghana)	Director of Research Association of African Universities
SCHWAB, Klaus (Germany)	President of the Foundation Board World Economic Forum, Geneva
SENGUPTA, Arjun (India)	Former Member-Secretary Planning Commission of India
SHOKHIN, Alexandre (Russian Federation)	Member State Duma (Parliament)
STEWART, Frances (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)	Director International Development Centre Oxford University
TAYLOR, Lance (United States of America)	Professor of Economics New School for Social Research
UMAÑA, Alvaro (Costa Rica)	Associate Professor and Director of Natural Resources Management Programme of the Central American Business Institute (INCAE)
URRUTIA, Miguel (Colombia)	Chairman of the Board of Directors Central Bank of Colombia

Annex IV

LIST OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED AMONG THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES*

	Country	Date of inclusion on the list
1.	Afghanistan	1971
2.	Angola	1994
3.	Bangladesh	1975
4.	Benin	1971
5.	Bhutan	1971
6.	Burkina Faso	1971
7.	Burundi	1971
8.	Cambodia	1991
9.	Cape Verde	1977
10.	Central African Republic	1975
11.	Chad	1971
12.	Comoros	1977
13.	Djibouti	1982
14.	Equatorial Guinea	1982
15.	Eritrea	1994
16.	Ethiopia	1971
17.	Gambia	1975
18.	Guinea	1971
19.	Guinea-Bissau	1981
20.	Haiti	1971
21.	Kiribati	1986
22.	Lao People's Democratic Republic	1971
23.	Lesotho	1971
24.	Liberia	1990
25.	Madagascar	1991
26.	Malawi	1971
27.	Maldives	1971
28.	Mali	1971
29.	Mauritania	1986
30.	Mozambique	1988
31.	Myanmar	1987
32.	Nepal	1971
33.	Niger	1971

	Country	Date of inclusion on the list
34.	Rwanda	1971
35.	Samoa	1971
36.	Sao Tome and Principe	1982
37.	Sierra Leone	1982
38.	Solomon Islands	1991
39.	Somalia	1971
40.	Sudan	1971
41.	Togo	1982
42.	Tuvalu	1986
43.	Uganda	1971
44.	United Republic of Tanzania	1971
45.	Vanuatu[b]	1985
46.	Yemen	1971
47.	Zaire	1991
48.	Zambia	1991

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[a] Botswana, included on the list in 1971, was graduated from the list in December 1994 by the General Assembly in its resolution 49/133, having satisfied the criteria for graduation.

[b] Recommended for graduation from the list in 1997, subject to review in that year.